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AUTHOR Zafirau, S. James
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ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the progress from 1982 to 1986 of those students adversely affected by prior racial segregation practices in the Cleveland public schools, and compared their progress with that of the non-adversely affected students in the district. These analyses were done in terms of reading comprehension achievement, since that has been viewed as the central measure of academic achievement. Blacks were the only racial group comprising a greater proportion of the adversely affected students than of the non-adversely affected students. The adversely affected students' actual reading comprehension achievement scores were better than expected. However, although the reading comprehension achievement gap between the adversely affected and non-adversely affected student has narrowed from spring of 1982 to spring of 1986 system-wide and for every type of school, the remaining achievement gap between these two student groups is still educationally significant. The trend is positive and encouraging, but more remains to be accomplished. This report includes statistical data tables and figures and concludes with five recommendations. (LHW)

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AN ANALYSIS OF 1982 TO 1986 READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENTS IN THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Prepared by:
S. James Zafirau, Ph.D.

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Typed by:
Pat Bogdanski

CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
November, 1986

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Analysis of 1982 to 1986 Reading Comprehension Achievement Results for Adversely Affected Students in the Cleveland Public Schools

S. James Zafirau

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to analyze the progress from 1982 to 1986 of those students adversely affected by prior racial segregation practices in the Cleveland Public Schools, and to compare their progress with that of the non-adversely affected students in the district. These analyses were done in terms of reading comprehension achievement, since reading comprehension has been viewed as the central measure of academic achievement.

FINDINGS

Unless otherwise noted, the following statistics pertain to those students in the school district having reading comprehension test scores for both spring of 1982 and spring of 1986 (23,650).

1. 9.9 percent (2,343) were adversely affected.

2. 32.5 percent (7,698) were elementary (grades 1-6) students,
   42.0 percent (9,927) were junior high school (grades 7-9) students, and
   25.5 percent (6,025) were senior high school (grades 10-12) students.

3. 77.6 percent (18,345) were black,
   18.8 percent (4,453) were white,
   3.0 percent (698) were Hispanic,
   .4 percent (106) were Asian or Pacific Islanders, and
   .2 percent (48) were native Americans.

4. 50.6 percent (11,966) were females, and
   49.4 percent (11,684) were males.

5. The average normal curve equivalent "percentile rank" (NCE) reading comprehension score for the district was 46.7 for the spring of 1982 and 49.0 for the spring of 1986, an overall increase of 2.3 NCEs.

6. Blacks comprised 89.0% of the adversely affected students vs. 76.3% of the non-adversely affected students, being the only racial group comprising a greater proportion of the adversely affected group than of the non-adversely affected group.

7. The proportion of males in the adversely affected group was greater at 59.3 percent than in the non-adversely affected group at 48.3 percent.

8. From spring of 1982 to spring of 1986 the average reading comprehension score of the adversely affected students went from 27.8 NCEs to 36.7 NCEs (for a gain of nearly 9 NCEs), in contrast to non-adversely affected students who went from 50.2 NCEs to 50.3 NCEs (average gain of .1 NCE).

9. The adversely affected students' actual reading comprehension achievement scores were better than expected--had they simply achieved as comparable non-adversely affected students achieved--at each building level:

   - 41.57 NCEs actual vs. 37.95 NCEs predicted at the elementary school level, an improvement over predicted of 3.62 NCEs.
   - 38.10 NCEs actual vs. 36.13 NCEs predicted at the junior high school level, an improvement over predicted of 1.97 NCEs.
   - 34.27 NCEs actual vs. 32.26 NCEs predicted at the senior high school level, an improvement over predicted of 1.97 NCEs.
   - Actual reading comprehension achievement for adversely affected students in 1986 was greater than predicted (as above) in each grade 6 through 12. This, however, was not so in grades 4 and 5, in which grades adversely affected students were comprised of students who had been nonpromoted one or more times.

CONCLUSION

Although the reading comprehension achievement gap between the adversely affected and non-adversely affected student has narrowed from spring of 1982 to spring of 1986 (system-wide and for every type of school), the remaining achievement gap between these two student groups is still educationally significant. The trend is positive and encouraging, but more remains to be accomplished.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. More effective ways of accelerating the academic achievement (especially in reading) of the adversely affected students must be identified, developed, implemented, and evaluated at the building level.

2. Better strategies directed at reducing the percent of students not tested in reading, particularly at the secondary level, should be developed, implemented and evaluated at the building level.

3. More effective strategies for reducing the non-promotion rate, dropout rate, and student absenteeism of the adversely affected students should be identified, implemented and evaluated at the building level.

AN ANALYSIS OF SPRING, 1982 to SPRING, 1986 READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS FOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENTS IN THE CLEVELAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction

In the past a large number of students were adversely affected by segregation practices in the Cleveland Public Schools. Although reduced in number each year, a large number of these adversely affected students are still attending the Cleveland Public Schools. These students have characteristically achieved academically at a lower level than non-adversely affected students. One basic and perhaps centrally important indicator of academic achievement which is measured for all students in the district is the reading comprehension score. Historically, and by definition, adversely affected students in Cleveland have scored very much below both the national and local achievement norms. One of the basic measures of success, therefore, for any overall desegregation effort, is the marked enhancement of the reading comprehension achievement scores for the adversely affected student group, in particular.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the reading comprehension achievement scores of the adversely affected

student population for spring, 1982 and spring, 1986, and determine whether or not their progress between those testing dates has significantly exceeded or not that of the non-adversely affected students. Only if their progress is greater than for the non-adversely affected students will the discrepancy between the two groups be reduced. The discrepancy between the two groups must be significantly reduced for the overall desegregation effort to be a success.

Method

The statistical methods used to examine, compare, and contrast the adversely and non-adversely affected groups has proceeded on two levels: descriptive and inferential. The descriptive statistics present such things as race and sex breakdowns of each group by percents, head counts, average scores, and the like. To determine whether or not a numerical difference is more likely to be real or explainable by chance fluctuations, inferential statistics are used.

In this study comparisons are further confounded because the adversely and non-adversely affected student groups are known, by definition, to be different in terms of the criterion variable (CTBS reading comprehension score) from the onset. As a result, all experimental and most quasi-experimental designs are not suitable for the evaluation of these results. This has led to the use in this study of the regression model, a somewhat complex evaluation

model approved and utilized in Title I and Chapter 1 evaluations for a number of years in certain school districts throughout the nation, including Cleveland. This model looks at the performance of the non-adversely affected student using the same two test scores (the pretest being the spring, 1982 score and the posttest being the spring, 1986 score). From these scores a regression line with descriptive statistics is derived. And from these statistics a linear equation is derived so that a posttest score can be predicted from any pretest score of that non-adversely affected group. There, of course, is always a margin of inaccuracy and a corresponding level of confidence associated with these predictions. Such a prediction can be applied to pretest scores from the adversely affected groups, also. These predicted scores would then be the best estimates of posttest scores had these adversely affected individuals been part of the non-adversely affected group (since they were predicted from the score trends of the non-adversely affected group). These predicted scores could then be compared to the actual posttest scores for each student in the adversely affected group. In this way it could be determined if the adversely affected group's actual progress in reading comprehension achievement would be the same, worse, or better than it would have been had it progressed at the same rate as the non-adversely affected group. This method of analysis was used here to examine results for each building type (high school, grades 10-12; junior high, grades 7-9; and elementary school, grades 1-6) and for each grade level, as well as for the system as a whole.

School District Student Population

Of all those students in the school district having reading comprehension test scores for both spring, 1982 and spring, 1986 (23,650), 9.9 percent (2,343) were adversely affected students and 90.1 percent (21,307) were not. Of this total student population, 32.5 percent (7,698) were elementary students (grades 1-6), 42.0 (9,927) percent were junior high school students (grades 7-9), and 25.5 percent (6,025) were senior high school students (grades 10-12). The race breakdown was 77.6 percent (18,345) black, 18.8 percent (4,453) white, 3.0 percent (698) Hispanic, .4 percent (106) Asian or Pacific Islanders, and .2 percent (48) native Americans. Females accounted for 50.6 percent (11,966), and males for 49.4 percent (11,684) of the population. The average normal curve equivalent "percentile rank" (NCE) reading comprehension score for the district was 46.7 for the spring of 1982 and 49.0 for the spring of 1986, an overall increase of 2.3 NCEs. (An NCE score is like a percentile rank score which has had its inherent distortion removed. A minimum possible NCE score is 1, and a maximum possible score is 99. The national average NCE score is 50.)

Findings

In 1985-1986, there were important differences between the adversely and the non-adversely affected student populations with respect to their racial composition, as has been true since such

records have been kept. Of the total group of students who had CTBS reading comprehension achievement test scores for both spring of 1982 and spring of 1986, the racial composition percents for the adversely affected group compared with the non-adversely affected group were: 89.0% vs. 76.3% for blacks, 10.2% vs. 19.8% for whites, .6% vs. 3.2% for Hispanics, .1% vs. .2% for native Americans, and none vs. .5% for Asian or Pacific Islanders, respectively. In other words, black students are the only group which comprises a greater proportion of the adversely affected group than it does of the non-adversely affected student group. The Hispanic, native American, and Asian or Pacific Islander racial groups each had a non-adversely affected student population that was proportionately at least twice as great as its adversely affected student population. See Table 1 and Figure 1 for more statistical detail and graphic representation.

Insert Table 1 and Figure 1

The proportion of males in the adversely affected group was greater at 59.3 percent than in the non-adversely affected group (48.3). Correspondingly, the opposite pattern was found for females, at 40.7 percent and 51.7 percent, respectively. Details of these facts are presented in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 1

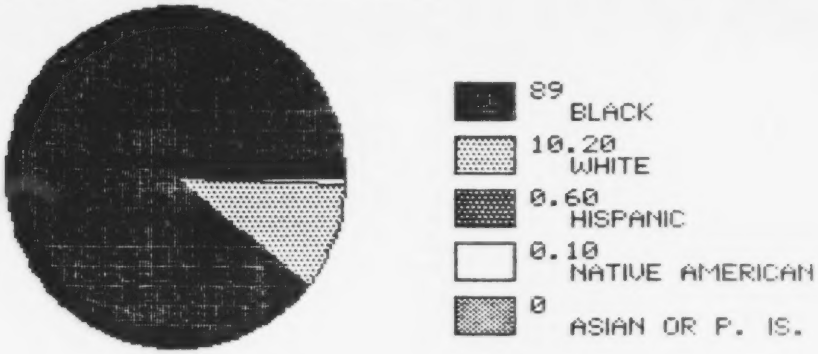
PERCENT (WITH TOTAL NUMBER) OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* IN EACH STUDENT GROUP BY RACE

Student Group Type	Black	White	Hispanic	Native American	Asian or Pacific Islanders	Combined Row Total
Adversely Affected	89.0 (2,085)	10.2 (240)	.6 (15)	.1 (3)	0 (0)	100 (2,343)
Non-Advers. Affected	76.3 (16,259)	19.8 (4,213)	3.2 (683)	.2 (45)	.5 (106)	100 (21,306)
Combined Total	77.6 (18,344)	18.8 (4,453)	3.0 (698)	.2 (48)	.4 (106)	100 (23,649)

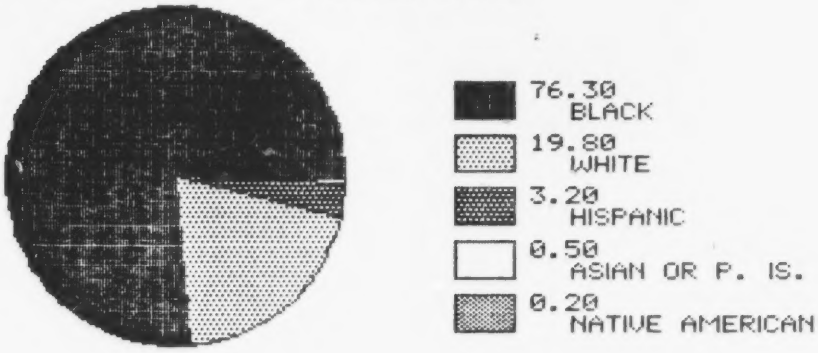
* These statistics include only those students for whom both spring, 1982 and spring, 1986 CTBS reading comprehension scores were available, since this study uses progress in reading comprehension as its primary criterion variable. Row percents may not total exactly 100% because of rounding errors.

Figure 1

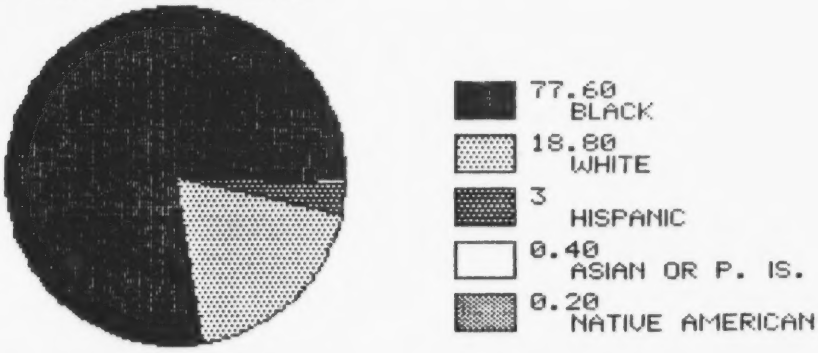
PERCENT OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* BY RACE
FOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED GROUP



PERCENT OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* BY RACE
FOR NON-ADVERSELY AFFECTED GROUP



PERCENT OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* BY RACE
FOR ALL STUDENTS



* Only students who have both 1982 and 1986 CTBS Reading Comprehension Achievement Test Scores are included.

Insert Table 2 and Figure 2

In the spring of 1982 the adversely affected students (who had matched 1986 scores) had an average reading comprehension score of only 27.8 NCEs, in contrast to 50.2 NCEs for the non-adversely affected students who had matched 1986 scores. However, by the spring of 1986 this same adversely affected group's average score increased by 9.0 NCEs to 36.7 NCEs. This contrasted favorably to the progress of the non-adversely affected student group whose average spring, 1986 score remained nearly the same at 50.3 NCEs, yielding a net gain of .1 NCE. See Table 3 and Figures 3 and 4 for more statistical and graphic detail. These findings indicate that, although the average reading achievement of the adversely affected student lags behind that of the non-adversely affected student, the gap between the adversely and non-adversely affected student is narrowing. This is a positive sign.

Insert Table 3 and Figures 3 and 4

The above results, although on the face of it encouraging, nevertheless could be misleading. This is because comparing the progress of two dissimilar groups can be misleading, and because the

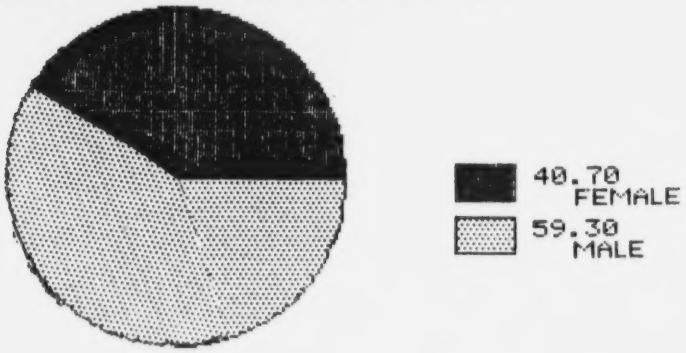
Table 2

PERCENT (WITH TOTAL NUMBER) OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* IN EACH STUDENT GROUP BY SEX

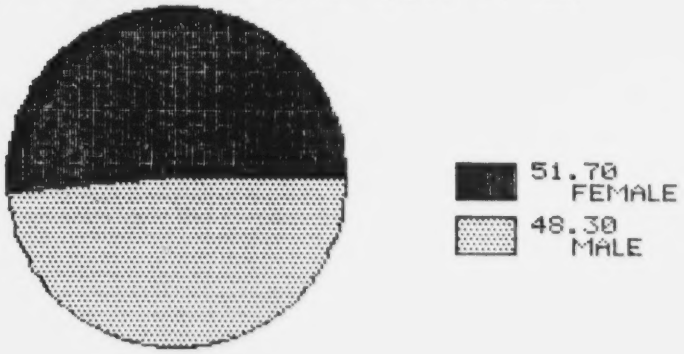
Student Group Type	Sex: Male	Female	Combined Total
Adversely Affected	59.3 (1,389)	40.7 (954)	100.0 (2,343)
Non-Adversely Affected	48.3 (10,295)	51.7 (11,011)	100.0 (21,306)
Combined Total	49.4 (11,684)	50.6 (11,965)	100.0 (23,649)

* Only students who have both 1982 and 1986 CTBS Reading Comprehension Achievement Test Scores are included.

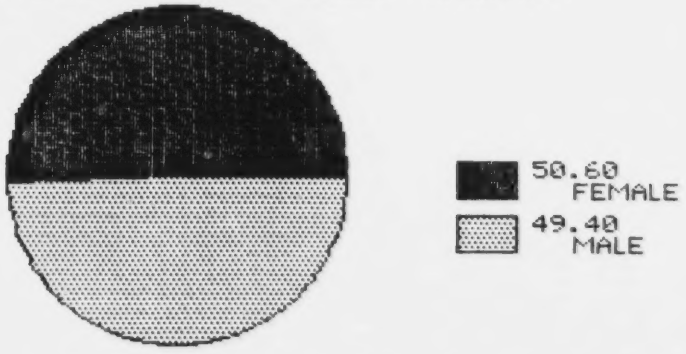
PERCENT OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* IN THE
ADVERSELY AFFECTED GROUP BY SEX



PERCENT OF 1982-1986 STUDENTS* IN THE
NON-ADVERSELY AFFECTED GROUP BY SEX



PERCENT OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS*
IN TOTAL 1982-1986 SCHOOL POPULATION



* Only students who have both 1982 and 1986 CTBS Reading Comprehension Achievement Test Scores are included.

Table 3

MEAN (AVERAGE) AND MATCHED SPRING CTBS READING COMPREHENSION NCE SCORES WITH NUMBER OF STUDENTS FOR ADVERSELY AND NON-ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENTS BY SCHOOL YEAR FOR 1982 TO 1986

Student Group Type	Mean CTBS Reading Comprehension NCE Scores: 1982	1986	Difference
Adversely Affected	27.8 (2,343)	36.7 (2,343)	+9.0* (2,343)
Non-Adversely Affected	50.2 (21,307)	50.3 (21,307)	+.1 (21,307)
Combined Total	48.0 (23,650)	49.0 (23,650)	+1.0 (23,650)

* Rounding error accounts for the .1 discrepancy.

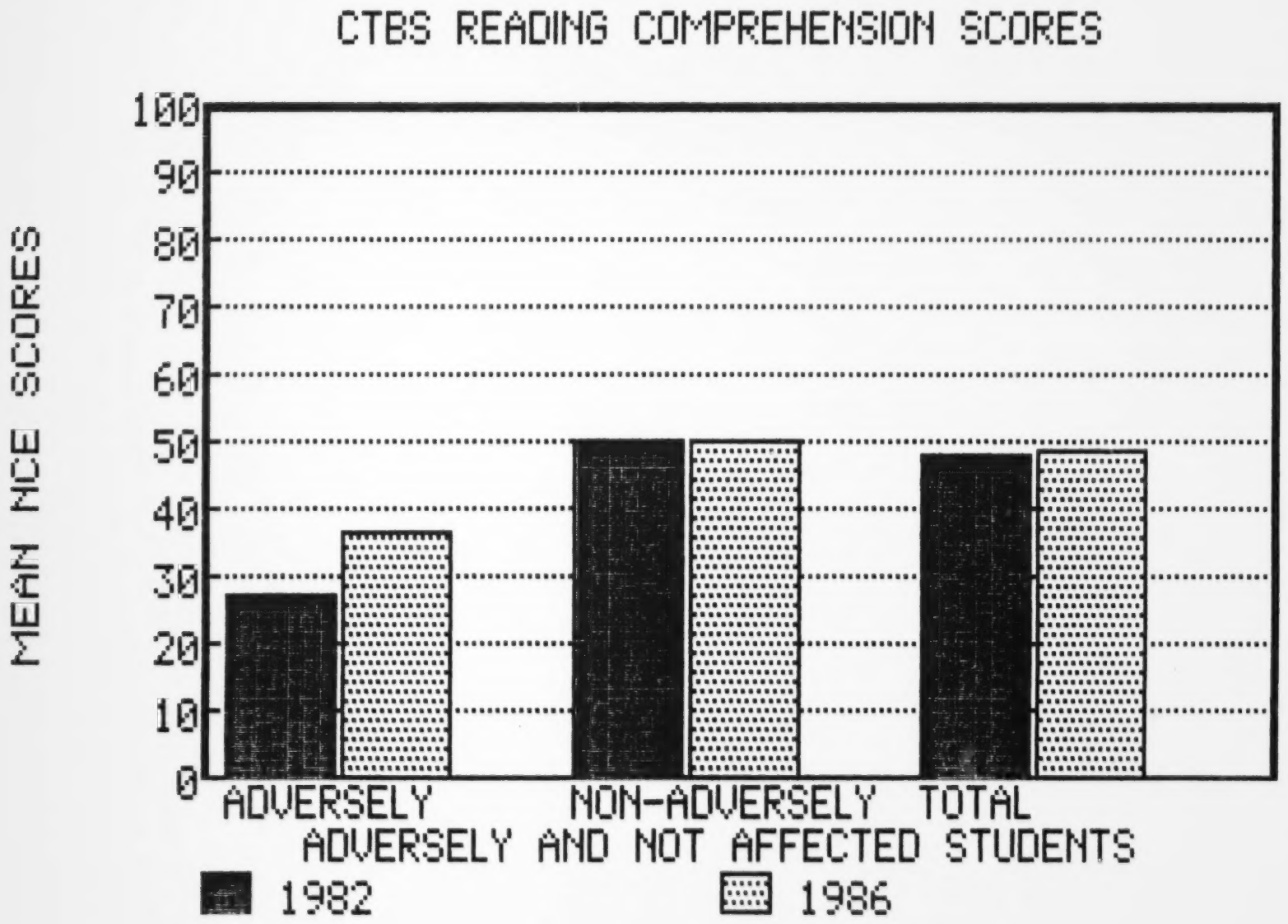

CTBS READING COMPREHENSION SCORES
MEAN NCE SCORES
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
ADVERSELY
NON-ADVERSELY
TOTAL
ADVERSELY AND NOT AFFECTED STUDENTS
1982
1986

Figure 3

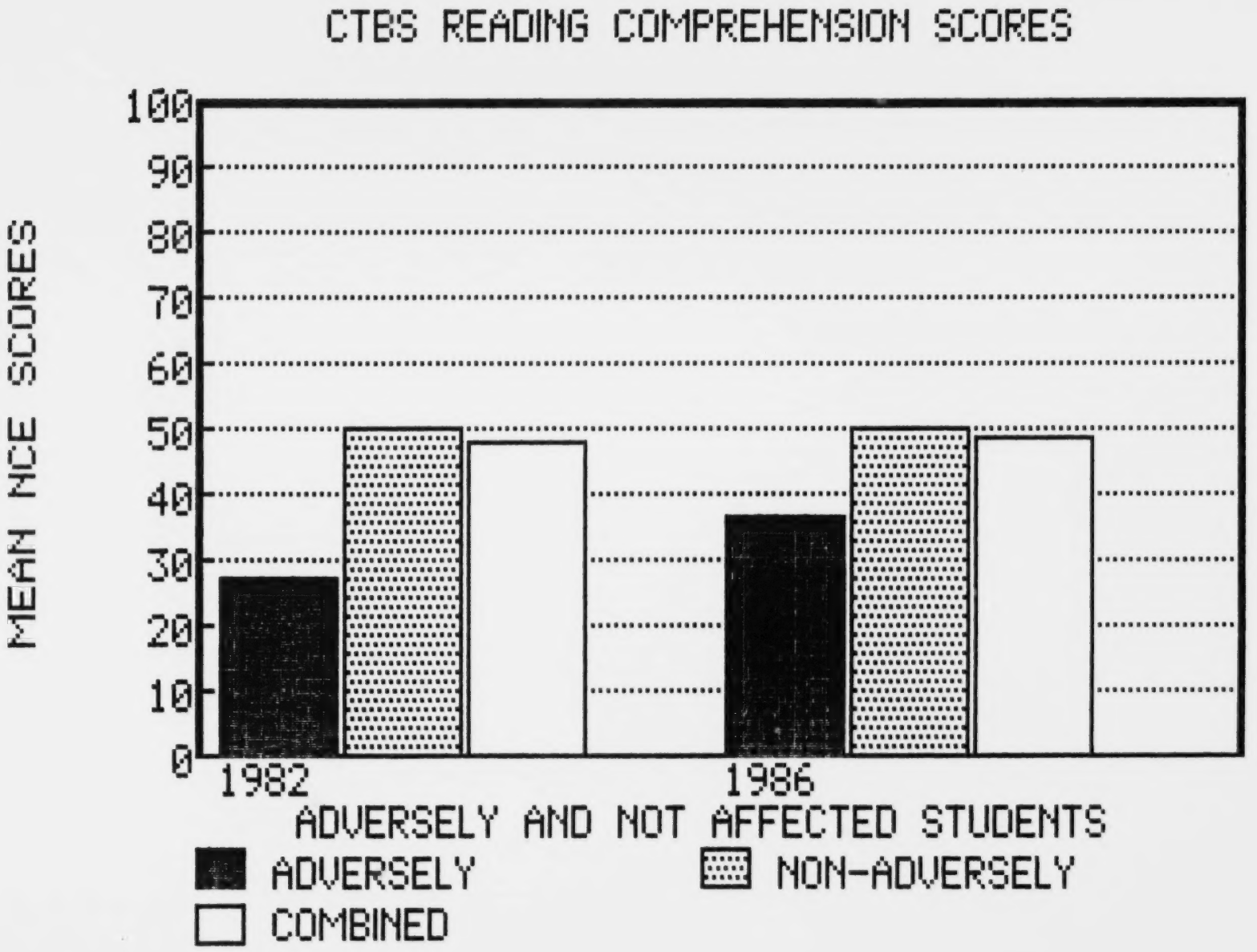

CTBS READING COMPREHENSION SCORES
MEAN NCE SCORES
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1982
1986
ADVERSELY AND NOT AFFECTED STUDENTS
ADVERSELY
NON-ADVERSELY
COMBINED

Figure 4

evaluation of the adversely affected group by itself does not speak to the question of how well these students could have been expected to do had they progressed as comparable students in the non-adversely affected group. This is where the regression model for evaluating the reading comprehension results for the adversely affected students becomes useful. When using this regression model, the results achieved are somewhat different than those just described. For all students in all schools, using the regression technique, the adversely affected students were expected to have an average posttest score of 36.04 NCEs, when in fact they achieved an average of 36.74 NCEs. This represents an average NCE gain of .7 over that predicted using the performance of the entire set of non-adversely affected students as a data base for regression prediction purposes. This was also done independently for each type of school. The average NCE results for elementary schools was 37.95 predicted and 41.57 actual (+3.62 NCE gain), for junior high schools 36.13 predicted and 38.10 actual (+1.97 NCE gain), and for senior high schools 32.26 predicted and 34.23 actual (+1.97 NCE gain).* Each type of school showed an average positive gain over expected in reading scores for adversely affected students, with elementary

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* It can readily be observed that the average NCE difference between predicted and actual posttest scores in the entire district for the adversely affected is notably less than that difference computed for any of the three school building levels. This is the consequence of how the regression model works, since each school level of analysis is based on its own correspondingly unique set of non-adversely affected student data for determining its predictive equation. That is, each school level and each grade level has a different predictive equation. This uniqueness of each equation results in the observed fact that the results are not additive in the simplest sense of that term.

schools as a group showing the greatest average gain. The average positive gain over expected in reading scores for adversely affected students was statistically significant (two-tailed $p < .01$) for each type of school. See Table 4 for more statistical detail and Figure 5 for a graphic representation.

Insert Table 4 and Figure 5

These same types of analyses were additionally done for each grade level, independently, for which there existed some adversely affected students (grades 4 through 12). In seven of these nine grades the actual posttest performance exceeded that expected through the regression prediction technique. The two grades for which this finding did not occur were grades 4 (with six students having an average NCE change of a negative 2.7) and grade 5 (with 48 students having an average NCE change of a negative .6). Both of these grades represented adversely affected students who had been non-promoted and were off-grade. The grade showing the most positive gain was grade 6 with an average gain of +4.0 NCEs, followed by grade 7 (+3.9 NCEs), grade 11 (+2.9 NCEs), and grade 10 (+2.3 NCEs). The actual posttest performance over that expected through regression projections was statistically significant (two-tailed $p < .01$) in five grades. These were grades 11, 10, 9, 7, and 6. See Table 5 for additional statistical detail, and Figures 6 and 7 for graphic representations of these results.

Table 4

1982-1986 REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS
FOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENTS BY SCHOOL TYPE

School Category	Mean NCE Pretest Score	Mean NCE Post-Test Score: Predicted	Actual	Mean NCE* Difference	Two-Tailed p<	Number of Cases
Elementary	27.52	37.95	41.57	+3.62	.001	181
Jr. High School	27.21	36.13	38.10	+1.97	.001	1178
Sr. High School	28.48	32.26	34.23	+1.97	.001	984
All Schools	27.77	36.04	36.74	+ .70	.013	2343

* The mean NCE difference for each school category is based on a correspondingly different predictive equation and predictive scores. The NCE difference score is computed by subtracting the predicted CTBS Reading Comprehension NCE score from the actual posttest score.

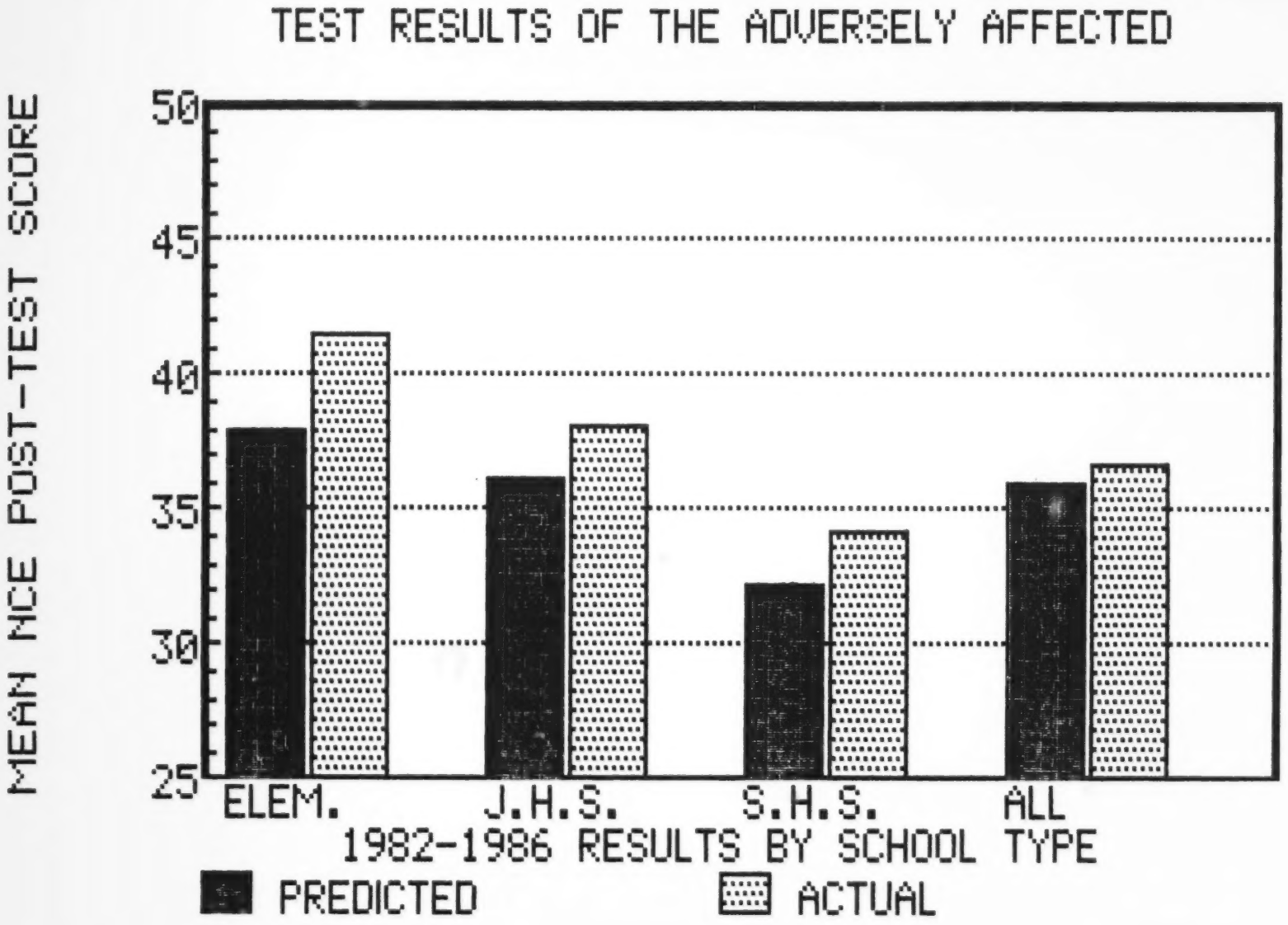

TEST RESULTS OF THE ADVERSELY AFFECTED
MEAN NCE POST-TEST SCORE
50
45
40
35
30
25
ELEM.
J.H.S.
S.H.S.
ALL
1982-1986 RESULTS BY SCHOOL TYPE
PREDICTED
ACTUAL

Figure 5

Insert Table 5 and Figures 6 and 7

Summary and Implications

Although the reading comprehension achievement gap between the adversely affected and non-adversely affected students has narrowed from spring of 1982 to spring of 1986 (system-wide and for every type of school), the remaining achievement gap between these two student groups is still educationally significant. The trend is positive and encouraging, but more remains to be accomplished.

The adversely affected students, in contrast to the non-adversely affected students, have a greater proportion of blacks and a greater proportion of males. The typical non-adversely affected student in the Cleveland Public Schools who is tested ranks close to the national average in terms of reading comprehension achievement (50.2 NCEs for 1982 and 50.3 NCEs for 1986). This is not so for the adversely affected student, whose average reading comprehension score was 27.8 NCEs in 1982 and 36.7 NCEs in 1986. These scores, of course, do not include those of dropouts or of the chronic truants who could not be tested. These omissions almost certainly inflate the average scores obtained. (See the 1982-1984 Adversely Affected Student Study for more detail, particularly Table 6.) Although these considerations also affect other school

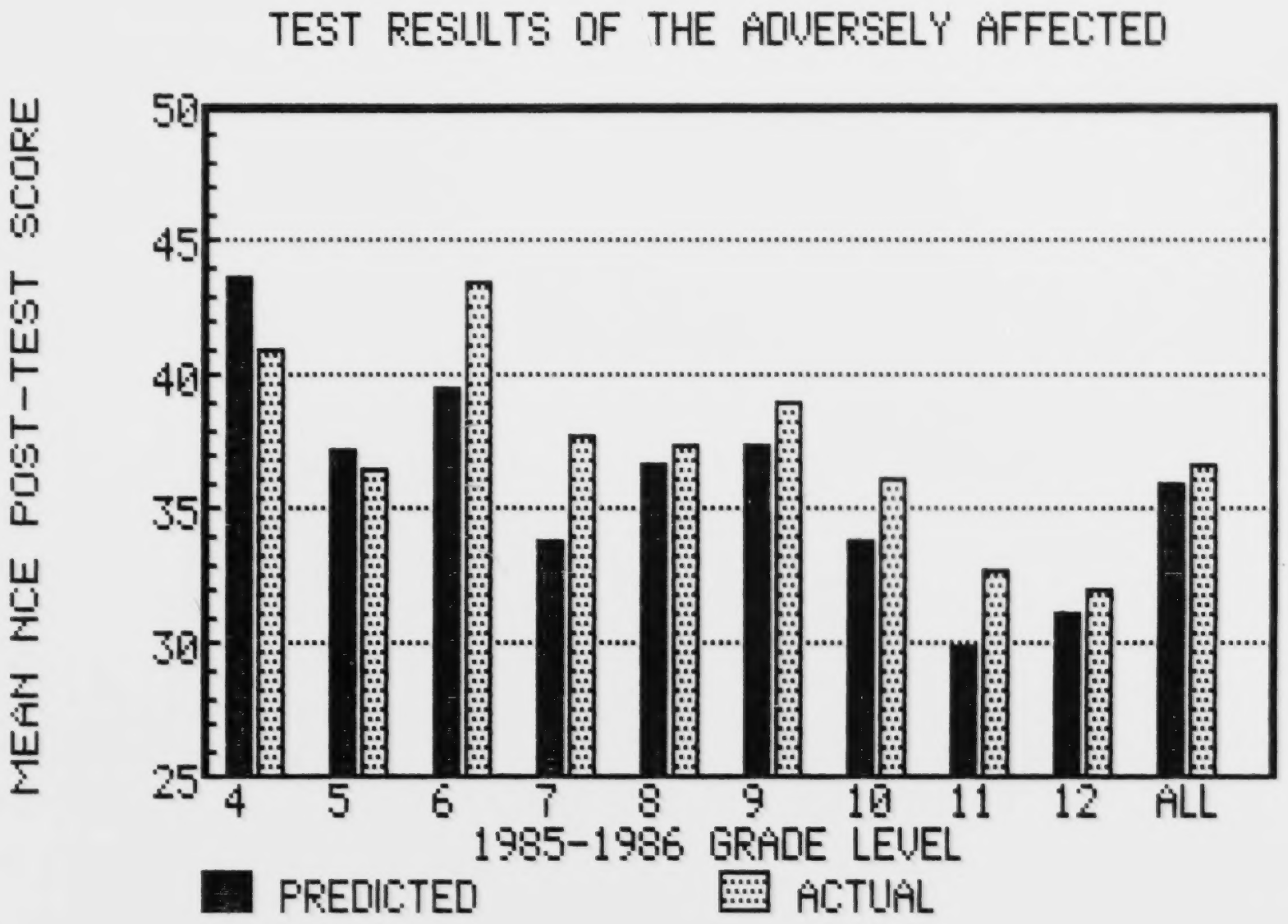
Table 5

1982-1986 REGRESSION ANALYSIS RESULTS
FOR ADVERSELY AFFECTED STUDENTS BY GRADE LEVEL

1985-1986 Grade Level	Mean NCE Pretest Score	Mean NCE Post-Test Score: Predicted	Actual	Mean NCE* Difference	Two-Tailed p <	Number of Cases
4**	40.5	43.7	41.0	-2.7	.690	6
5**	30.2	37.2	36.6	- .6	.809	48
6	25.9	39.5	43.5	+4.0	.002	127
7	26.5	33.8	37.7	+3.9	.001	298
8	26.4	36.7	37.4	+ .7	.262	431
9	28.5	37.4	39.1	+1.7	.009	449
10	30.1	33.9	36.2	+2.3	.001	467
11	26.3	29.9	32.8	+2.9	.001	312
12	28.1	31.1	32.0	+ .9	.311	205
All Grades	27.8	36.0	36.7	+ .7	.013	2343

* The mean NCE difference for each grade level is based on a correspondingly different predictive equation and predictive scores.

** Major interpretation of reliability and validity problems occur at these grade levels because of the smallness of the samples and because they represent non-promoted students being evaluated off-grade level.


TEST RESULTS OF THE ADVERSELY AFFECTED
MEAN NCE POST-TEST SCORE
50
45
40
35
30
25
4
5
6
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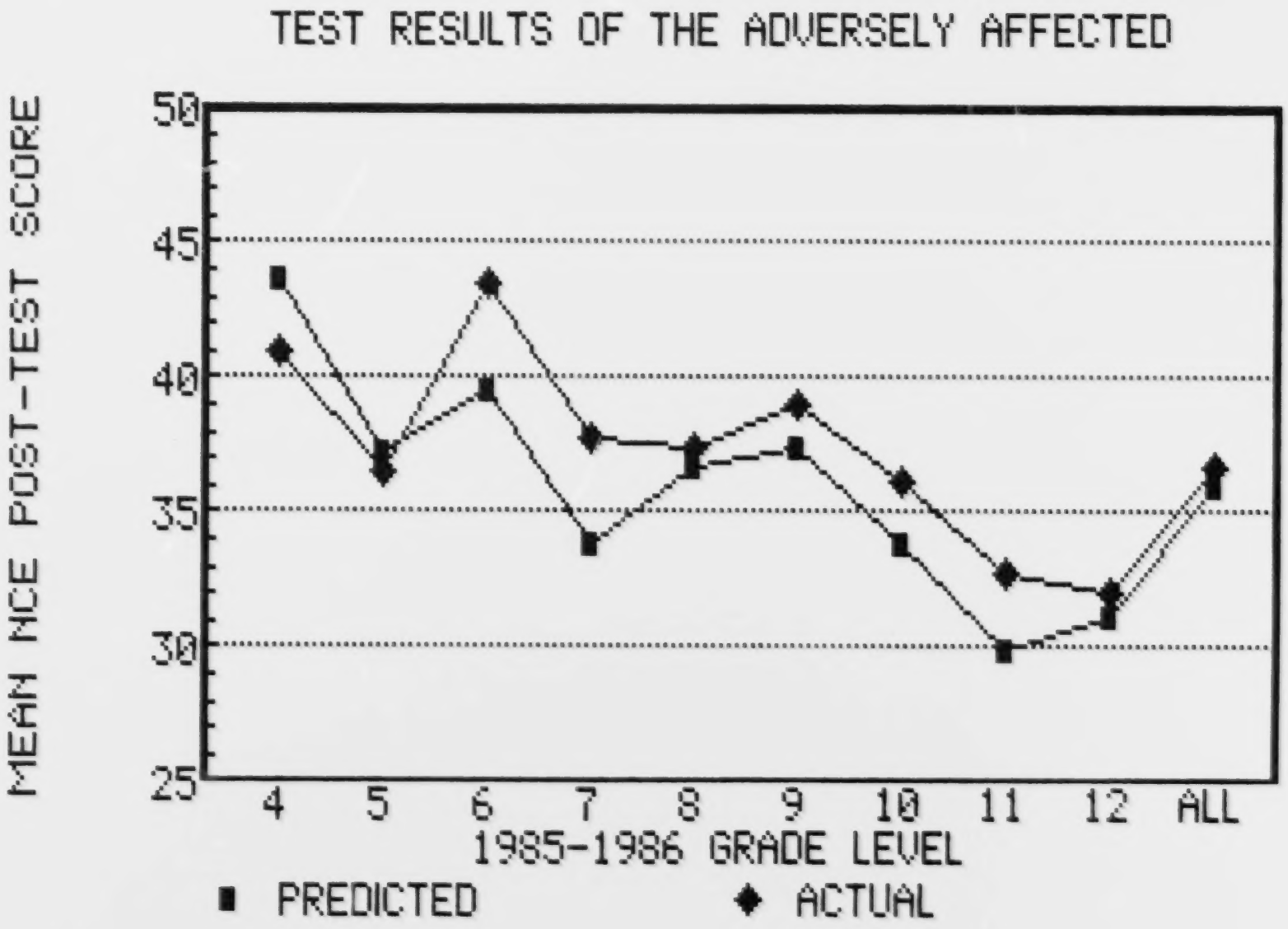
8
9
10
11
12
ALL
1985-1986 GRADE LEVEL
PREDICTED
ACTUAL

Figure 6


TEST RESULTS OF THE ADVERSELY AFFECTED
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11
12
ALL
1985-1986 GRADE LEVEL
PREDICTED
ACTUAL

Figure 7

districts, the impact of such score exclusions on district-wide averages depends on the severity of the dropout and attendance problems.

If the recent past history is repeated, then of those who enter the Cleveland Public Schools in the first grade, approximately one-half can be expected to drop out before graduation from high school. Since less than one percent drop out in grades K through 6, nearly half of those entering seventh grade will drop out of school before graduating. Because over two-thirds of all dropouts do so for the reason of being overage, the dropout problem probably begins in the first grade a student is retained. (See the 1982-1984 Adversely Affected Student Study for more detail, particularly Table 7.) The first grade of non-promotion is typically in elementary school, and is caused primarily by the student's inability to perform at grade level. Typically, lack of subject matter success in school is followed by increasing absenteeism. And the more a child is absent, the more likely that same student's academic achievement will fall off further. Thus, a vicious downward spiral is set in motion. Finally, the child drops out of school altogether when he/she becomes sufficiently discouraged or overage. These facts and dynamics again raise the issue of whether or not a policy of social promotion might, on balance, be a justifiable partial solution to the dropout problem, as well as to related achievement and promotion issues and policy concerns.

Where student interest in school can be enhanced, and when academic achievement in basic areas such as reading comprehension can be raised--particularly among the lowest achievers in the earliest grades--there also will be realistic hope that attendance will improve and that the dropout rate will be reduced. When this happens, it will benefit the adversely affected students especially, since they are currently much more at risk than the non-adversely affected student group in the areas of poor academic achievement, absenteeism, and dropping out of school.

Recommendations

1. The office of Reading, English/Language Arts and School Building Administrators should identify strategies directed at increasing the average reading comprehension achievement test score of the adversely affected students to that of the average non-adversely affected students. Those strategies identified should be implemented and evaluated at the building level. Corrective actions based upon evaluation results should be documented.

2. The Office of Reading, English/Language Arts and School Building Administrators should identify strategies directed at reducing the percent of students not tested in reading, particularly at the secondary level. Those strategies

identified should be implemented and evaluated at the building level. Corrective actions based upon evaluation results should be documented.

3. The Office of Reading, English/Language Arts and School Building Administrators should identify strategies directed at decreasing the percent of students not promoted at all grade levels. Those strategies identified should be implemented and evaluated at the building level. Corrective actions based upon evaluation results should be documented.

4. The Office of Reading, English/Language Arts; the Supportive Services Department; and School Building Administrators should identify strategies directed at reducing the percent of students who are absent at all grade levels, particularly in the secondary grades. Those strategies identified should be implemented and evaluated at the building level. Corrective actions based upon evaluation results should be documented.

5. The Office of Reading, English/Language Arts; the Supportive Services Department; and School Building Administrators should identify strategies directed at decreasing the percent of students who drop out of school and who are at risk of dropping out of school, particularly at the secondary level. Those strategies identified should be implemented and evaluated at the building level. Corrective actions based upon evaluation results should be documented.